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AUTHOR White, Inman
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ABSTRACT

Objectives of this research study were (1) to determine areas of agreement and disagreement concerning the value of Future Farmers of America (FFA) contests; (2) to determine if there is a need for additional contests, deletion of some contests, or changes in contest procedures; and (3) to determine if the contest activities selected are influenced by the number of years of vocational agriculture teaching experience of the advisor, total number of vocational agriculture students, number of teachers in the vocational agriculture department, and size of school. Questionnaires were distributed to 1,124 individuals (secondary school principals, vocational agriculture teachers, parents, and FFA members in each Texas school district). Five hundred seventy-six questionnaires contained the data analyzed. Implications from answers to sixty value statements in connection with objective 1 were that there were many values and benefits derived from FFA contests. Over 85% of the four groups were in favor of keeping the fifteen FFA contests currently offered. Contests did not seem to be significantly affected by any of the criteria in objective 3. Eleven recommendations were proposed including revision and improvement of some contests and institution of new ones, promotion of better communication between state, national, and area offices, and a follow-up study in three or four years involving the same four groups of respondents. (BL)

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A SUMMARY REPORT OF RESEARCH

AN ASSESSMENT OF TEXAS FFA CONTESTS AS PERCEIVED BY SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, PARENTS, CURRENT FFA MEMBERS, AND TEACHERS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

by

Inman White
Subject Matter Specialist
Vocational Instructional Services

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Department of Agricultural Education
Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas 77843

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Inman White

FOREWORD

Contests have been a feature of the Future Farmers of America for almost 50 years. Originally developed as small, informal activities among students within a local department of vocational agriculture or among a few nearby schools before the FFA became a formal organization, leadership and technical skill contests have become a major activity of the FFA organization within the framework of the program of secondary level vocational agriculture. As major activities, FFA contests are found at district, area, state, and national levels.

As the FFA has grown, so have differing perceptions of the values, purposes, and nature of the contest program among those persons, whether students or adults, associated with or affected by the program. Consequently, Dr. Inman White undertook the research study summarized herein to assess the FFA contest program in Texas as perceived by secondary school principals, parents, current third year FFA members, and teachers of vocational agriculture.

The findings, conclusions, and implications reported in Dr. White's study should provide "food for thought" for school personnel and Texas Education Agency personnel concerned with the program of vocational agriculture and the Future Farmers of America organization. For additional information on the study, the reader may wish to contact Dr. White at Vocational Instructional Services, F. E. Box 182, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843.

James E. Christiansen, Professor
Department of Agricultural Education
Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas 77843
June, 1977

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AN ASSESSMENT OF TEXAS FFA CONTESTS AS PERCEIVED BY SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, PARENTS, CURRENT FFA MEMBERS, AND TEACHERS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

INTRODUCTION

Future Farmers of America (FFA) contests have been a subject of discussion since their inception among professional workers in the field of agricultural education. Their value, in relation to time spent in preparing and training for the various contests, has been questioned from the educational point of view.

The FFA program, in both urban and rural settings, is a vital part of the total vocational agriculture program. The teacher of vocational agricultural education in the public schools of Texas is charged with the responsibility of advising and guiding FFA organizational activities and program of work. With pressures for accountability, many teachers of vocational agriculture are finding it exceedingly difficult to participate in all the FFA contests available. Several of these contests are the culmination of instruction and training in the classroom and laboratory. FFA competition begins at the local chapter level and proceeds through the district, area, state, regional, and national levels. As viewed by Bender, Clark, and Taylor (3), FFA contests are competitive educational experiences in which FFA members test their skills in agriculture-agribusiness and leadership and apply knowledge acquired from laboratory and classroom instruction.

All FFA contests and activities have acknowledged purposes and values, for they are designed to stimulate interest and develop abilities and skills needed by agricultural workers and leaders, according to Bender, Clark, and Taylor (3). While the FFA contests and activities are considered an important part of the instructional program in vocational agriculture, it is essential for all concerned to know if the contest program as now functioning is meeting the needs of all FFA members and vocational agriculture students.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to assess the FFA contest activities in Texas as perceived by secondary school principals, parents, current FFA members, and teachers of vocational agriculture. In order to achieve this purpose the following specific objectives were formulated:

1. To determine areas of agreement and disagreement among secondary school principals, parents, current FFA members, and vocational agriculture teachers concerning the value of FFA contests (with particular reference to improvement of program; purpose of program; conduct of program; educational value, reasons for entering; time expended in preparation and participation; expenses incurred in preparation, travel, and participation; and meeting the primary aim of FFA).
2. To determine if Texas secondary school principals, parents, current FFA members, and vocational agriculture teachers are of the opinion

that there is need for additional contests, deletion of some contests, or changes in present contest procedures.

3. To determine if the contest activities selected by Texas FFA chapters are influenced by the number of years of vocational agriculture teaching experience of the advisor, total number of students enrolled in the vocational agriculture classes, number of teachers in the vocational agriculture department, and size of high school.

To carry out the objectives of the study, six null hypotheses were derived from a theoretical base, formulated, and tested.

Methodology

This study was state-wide in scope. The sample drawn to collect data was composed of 1,124 individuals from 281 secondary school districts in those school systems that employed at least one secondary school principal and one teacher of vocational agricuture. The sample also included a parent and a current FFA member from the same school system. The sample was stratified considering number of schools in the ten supervisory areas and insuring that only one response, that of the head teacher, came from a multiple teacher department of vocational agriculture. Additionally, the study was delimited to teachers who had taught agriculture for three years or more at the school where presently assigned.

Data were collected through three-part mailed opinionnaires. While 697 usable opinionnaires were returned, 576 made up 144 matched sets of four opinionnaires from school districts. These sets were the data analyzed.

Major Findings

Summary of Findings Relating to Objective One

The purpose of objective one was to determine areas of agreement and disagreement among Texas secondary school principals, parents, current FFA members, and teachers of vocational agriculture concerning the value of FFA contests (with particular references to improvement of program, purpose of program, conduct of contests, educational value of contests, reasons for entering contests, time expended in preparation and participation in contests, expenses incurred in preparation, participation, and travel for contests, and meeting the primary aim of FFA).

Sixty value statements were developed pertaining to these eight areas above to determine the extent of agreement and disagreement. The related null hypothesis was statistically tested for each value statement with 44 of the 60 statements showing significance at the .05 level and above revealing differences among the perceptions of secondary school principals, parents, current FFA members, and teachers of vocational agriculture concerning the value of FFA contests in Texas. A 5-point Likert-type scale was used by the respondents to agree or disagree with the statement contained on the instrument, with numerical rating values of 1 thru 5 with 1 being the greatest disagreement and 5 being the greatest agreement. The rating choices on the scale were: 1. Strongly Disagree (SD), 2. Disagree (D), 3. Undecided (U), 4. Agree (A), 5. Strongly Agree (SA). Analysis of variance with the Scheffé test was used to test the hypothesis

and determine where the difference actually lay. If interested in these differences, the reader may refer to the original study. However, in most cases below it is easy to see which group or groups caused the significant difference to occur. For example, it may be seen with regard to statement No. 1 in the Table below that the differences occurred between the FFA members and vocational agriculture teacher, with the latter being in most agreement with the statement.

TABLE I

Value Statements Pertaining to Eight Areas of the FFA Contest Program in Texas for Which Significant Differences at the .05 Level or Higher Existed With Respect to the Responses of 144 Sets of Secondary School Principals, Parents, Current FFA Members, and Teachers of Vocational Agriculture

Statements	Means			
	Secondary School Principals	Parents	Current FFA Members	Vo-Ag Teachers
A. Statements Pertaining to Improvement of Program				
*1. Recommendations for new FFA contests should be based on needs of the FFA members.	4.21	4.13	4.01	4.28
B. Statements Pertaining to Purpose of Program				
**2. FFA contests are currently designed primarily for students going into farming.	2.56	2.28	2.15	1.90
C. Statements Pertaining to Conduct of Contests				
*3. The most important problem facing the FFA contest program is getting FFA members to participate.	2.84	2.86	2.92	2.56
D. Statements Pertaining to Educational Values				
**4. FFA contests are overemphasized in the FFA program.	2.53	2.08	2.02	2.35
**5. All FFA contest activities should be based on the instructional program provided for students of vocational agriculture.	4.09	3.95	3.72	4.23

*Significant at the .05 level.
**Significant at the .01 level.

Table Continued

D. (Continued)	Secondary School Principals	Parents	Current FFA Members	Vo-Ag Teachers
**6. Contests should not be a part of FFA activities.	1.82	1.54	1.40	1.35
**7. Educational values received from FFA contests do not carry over into future lifes' activities.	1.80	1.53	1.54	1.42
**8. FFA contests do not assist in preparing students for earning a living.	1.97	1.66	1.76	1.72
**9. No real benefits can be expected from the FFA contests program.	1.72	1.47	1.54	1.37
**10. All FFA members should not have an opportunity to participate in the FFA contest program.	1.84	1.59	1.49	1.57
**11. The FFA contest program, overall, is applicable or relevant to all FFA members.	3.41	3.76	3.83	3.66
**12. Costs of preparing for and participating in FFA contests are not justified in terms of their worth or value to the individual.	2.18	1.99	2.17	1.84
**13. The FFA program is worthwhile in regard to educational benefits received from participation by the FFA members.	3.99	4.19	4.25	4.29
**14. The FFA contest programs should be continued.	4.26	4.46	4.60	4.60
**15. FFA contests are not an integral part of the instructional program.	2.08	1.97	2.04	1.69

Table Continued

D. (Continued)	Secondary School Principals	Parents	Current FFA Members	Vo-Ag Teachers
*16. The FFA contest awards system gives the public the impression that awards constitute the most important part of the FFA program.	2.49	2.28	2.59	2.39
*17. FFA contest awards help promote activities leading to desirable changes in behavior desired for personal growth.	3.97	4.03	4.02	4.17
**18. The FFA contest program should be dropped.	1.54	1.41	1.19	1.26
*19. Competitive spirit created through FFA contests does not help the FFA members in the future.	1.73	1.62	1.51	1.52
**20. Competition in FFA contests decreases cooperation among FFA members.	2.06	1.92	1.86	1.78
E. Statements Pertaining to Reasons for Entering				
**21. FFA members should decide which FFA contests to emphasize and enter.	3.37	3.61	3.96	3.45
**22. A checklist of standards achieved and skills performed should be used instead of FFA contests.	2.35	2.15	2.03	1.91
*23. FFA members are not influenced by the vocational agriculture teacher to enter certain FFA contests.	2.09	2.28	2.17	1.97

Table Continued	Secondary School Principals	Parents	Current FFA Members	Vo-Ag Teachers
E. (Continued)				
**24. FFA members enter FFA contests because of parental pressures.	2.30	2.03	1.76	1.85
*25. FFA members are not influenced by their peers to enter FFA contests.	2.53	2.54	2.69	2.40
**26. FFA members should enter FFA contests because of their related supervised experience program.	3.68	3.56	3.57	3.21
**27. FFA members should not enter FFA contests because of their interest in the contest.	1.94	1.83	1.64	1.75
F. Statements Pertaining to Time Expended in Preparation and Participation				
**28. Too much total time is spent in preparing for FFA contests.	2.69	2.17	1.19	2.56
**29. Too much class time is spent preparing for FFA contests.	2.74	2.26	1.95	2.51
**30. Too much time is spent in traveling to and from FFA contests.	2.58	2.10	1.92	2.17
**31. Too much time is spent participating in FFA contests.	2.38	2.02	1.82	2.10
**32. It is good to use class time to train for FFA contests after team members have been chosen.	3.02	3.33	3.57	2.68

Table Continued	Secondary School Principals	Parents	Current FFA Members	Vo-Ag Teachers
F. (Continued)				
**33. Class members benefit equally in preparing for FFA contests during class time.	3.11	3.45	3.60	3.40
**34. There are presently too many FFA contests for FFA members to prepare for and participate in successfully.	2.60	2.33	1.98	2.46
**35. Providing recognition and rewards is necessary to get FFA members to participate in FFA contests.	3.35	3.15	2.97	3.35
**36. Texas should <u>not</u> initiate and participate in FFA contests that are not a part of the National Contests Program.	2.40	2.33	2.03	2.17
**37. Participation by FFA members creates more interest in the total vo-ag program.	4.13	4.21	4.36	4.41
**38. Extra preparation for FFA contests should <u>not</u> be done during class time.	3.20	2.86	2.55	3.14
**39. FFA contests should be conducted during school time rather than on Saturdays.	2.69	3.15	3.35	3.55
G. <u>Statements Pertaining to Expenses Incurred in Preparation, Participation and Travel</u>				
**40. Too much money is spent in preparing for FFA contest activities.	2.36	2.06	1.90	1.02

Table Continued

G. (Continued)	Secondary School Principals	Parents	Current FFA Members	Vo-Ag Teachers
**41. Too much money is spent in participating in FFA contest activities.	2.35	2.02	1.84	1.99
**42. Too much money is spent in travel for FFA contest activities.	2.46	2.06	1.88	2.02
H. Statements Pertaining to Meeting the Primary Aims of FFA				
**43. The FFA contest program is not meeting another aim of the FFA Organization, that is, to develop agricultural cooperation in its members.	2.21	1.94	1.98	1.80
**44. The FFA contest program is meeting a third aim of the FFA Organization, that is, to develop agriculture citizenship in its members.	3.96	4.13	3.99	4.22

*Significant at the .05 level.
**Significant at the .01 level.

The 16 statements concerning the value of FFA contests in Texas for which significantly different means at the .05 level were not noted were:

1. First priority in improving the FFA contest program should be to make it applicable or relevant to all FFA members.
2. The FFA contest program does not need improvement.
3. FFA contests related to the newer vocational agriculture programs such as Cooperative Part-Time Training, and Pre-Employment Laboratory Training, etc., are not adequate for all members.
4. Vocational agriculture teachers should be used to judge FFA contests.
5. Lay personnel should not be used to judge FFA contests.
6. All FFA awards should be based on personal competition rather than on meeting a checklist of minimum standards.
7. The mechanics of operating the FFA contests involving items such as announcements, rules, schedules, selection of judges, etc., are generally satisfactory.
8. FFA contest activities arouse and cultivate feelings of envy, jealousy, hatred, and other undesirable social attitudes.
9. FFA contests do not cause an individual to cheat or otherwise be dishonest.
10. FFA contest awards become the main goal rather than satisfaction from performance to skill or finished product.
11. FFA students' training in or knowledge of contest should not be a prerequisite to enter the contest.

12. It is a good practice for both the FFA Chapter Farmer and Greenhand Farm Skill teams to use the same demonstration in competition against other schools year after year.
13. The FFA contest program is meeting one aim of the FFA Organization, that is, to develop agricultural leadership in its members.
14. Information in the FFA magazine is a useful resource in inspiration and preparation for contests.
15. The FFA contest program in no way affects the future educational, social, and economic fabric of our state.
16. The conduct of FFA members participating in contest activities generally is a credit to the vocational agriculture program and to the FFA Organization.

Other Findings Pertaining to Objective One

It should be noted that while the means of the four responding groups were in close agreement concerning the statement that "The FFA contest program does not need improvement," the mean fell to the disagree side of the scale. This statement resulted in a F-ratio value of 0.175, which was the lowest value of the 60 value statements.

Significant difference was not observed for the statement which states that "FFA contest activities arouse and cultivate feelings of envy, jealousy, hatred, and other undesirable social attitudes"; it resulted in a F-ratio value of 2.326. The secondary school principals and parents had the same mean of 1.97, while

the teachers' of vocational agriculture mean was a low of 1.78, and the current FFA members' mean was a high of 2.04. All the means of the responding groups fell on the disagreement side of the scale.

It was disclosed that no significant difference existed for the statement stating that "The conduct of FFA members participating in contest activities generally is a credit to the vocational agriculture program and to the FFA Organization." It should be noted that all responding groups had nearly the same level of agreement, between agree and strongly agree.

In summary, of the 60 valve statements pertaining to FFA contest activities, 37 were significant at the .01 level, seven at the .05 level, while 16 were not significant. It is interesting to note that there were no "strongly agree" scores revealed among the four responding groups or any statement.

Further analysis of the 44 value statements at the .05 level and above revealed that 23 statements were positive, while 21 statements were negative.

The Scheffé test indicated that out of the 60 value statements, the principals' group means were more extreme than the other three group means with respect to almost 72 percent of the statements. Inspection of the data for all four groups revealed that secondary school principals apparently viewed the value statements differently than did the parents, FFA members, and teachers of vocational agriculture groups. The principals did rate two statements the same as did the parents and one the same as the teachers.

The parents' group mean for only one statement was the same as that of teachers. Also, the FFA members' group means rated one statement the same as did the teachers.

Show Judging, Horse Judging, Sweetheart Contest, Talent Contest, and T.V. Farm Reporting.

Listed below in rank order are the six most frequently mentioned of 30 evaluative comments, suggestions, and recommendations made for improving the FFA contest program in Texas. These comments represented about one-half of the responding groups.

1. More competent judges should be used in all contests.
2. Material which is used in FFA contests should be designed in such a way as to lend itself to regular classroom instruction with the entire class.
3. Contests should be more applicable to agriculture and more relevant to the needs of the students.
4. All district, area, and state contests should have the same basic rules and requirements as the national contests.
5. Rules governing FFA contests should be updated in keeping with current trends in education.
6. Rules governing all FFA contests should be more strongly enforced.

Summary of Findings Relating to Objective Three

A significant correlation at the .05 level of confidence was observed relative to the relationship between the following seven areas of interest held by the teacher of vocational agriculture: animal science, plant science, soil science, supervised experience (programs and records), agricultural management, agricultural mechanics, and leadership, and the types of contests entered most often by the FFA chapter under their direction. These contests and

teaching preferences were:

1. Farm skills (Chapter Farmer) contest, with supervised experience (programs and records)
2. Farm skills (Greenhand) contest, with supervised experience (programs and records), and agricultural mechanics
3. Dairy cattle judging contest, with animal science
4. Chapter conducting (Greenhand) contest, with plant science, and supervised experience (programs and records)
5. Chapter conducting (Chapter Farmer) contest, with animal science, and agriculture management
6. Land judging contest, with soil science
7. Livestock judging contest, with animal science.

There was no significant correlation at the .05 level of confidence observed from the responses of the teachers of vocational agriculture in regard to the number of years of teaching experience and the types of contests entered.

Significant correlations at the .01 level of confidence were detected from the responses of the teachers of vocational agriculture concerning the number of students in the vocational agriculture program of the schools and the types of contests entered. The average number of students enrolled in the vocational agriculture department was 88.22. These contests that had a positive correlation with enrollment in vocational agriculture programs were:

1. Dairy Cattle Judging
2. Milk Quality and Dairy Foods Contest
3. Public Speaking
4. Meat Judging Contest

Significant correlations at the .05 level of confidence were observed from the responses of the teachers of vocational agriculture regarding the number of teachers in the vocational agriculture department and the types of contests entered. The average number of teachers of vocational agriculture in the department was 1.82. The number of teachers had a positive correlation with the following contests:

1. Dairy Cattle Judging Contest
2. Milk Quality and Dairy Foods Contest.

Significant positive correlations at the .01 level of confidence from the responses of the teachers of vocational agriculture regarding the number of teachers in the vocational agriculture department and the type of contests entered were observed. These contests were:

1. Livestock Judging Contest
2. Meat Judging Contest.

Significant correlations at the .05 level of confidence were noted from the responses of the teachers of vocational agriculture relative to the size of school enrollment and the types of contests entered. The average size high school enrollment was 302. Enrollment had a positive correlation with the following contests:

1. Milk Quality and Dairy Food Contest
2. Poultry Judging Contest.

There was only one contest that correlated at the .01 level of confidence from the response of the teachers of vocational agriculture concerning the size of school enrollment. This contest was Meat Judging.

Conclusions and Implications

The following conclusions and implications were developed from the findings of this study.

Although significant differences at the .05 level were not detected for 27 percent of the value statements, the implication exists that there were many values and benefits that were derived from the FFA contest program in Texas such as support of the following statements: "The FFA contest program is worthwhile in regard to educational benefits received from participation by the FFA members," "Educational values received from FFA contests carry over into future life's activities," "FFA contest awards help promote activities leading to desirable changes in behavior desired for personal growth," and "FFA contests assist in preparing students for earning a living."

Other findings revealed that the secondary school principals' group levels of agreement or disagreement were 20 points different from the other responding groups' in respect to 23 out of 60 FFA value statements. This implies either the need for attention being paid to more and better public information relative to the FFA contest program, and/or vo-ag teachers examining more critically the impressions the FFA contest program leaves on school principals considering that different points of perspective are probably held by principals who observe the workings of many different student organizations.

Since over 85 percent of the four responding groups were in favor of keeping all of the 15 FFA contests currently offered, it was concluded that

the contests should be continued. However, since 14 to 15 percent of the respondents were in favor of either deleting or revising the FFA Quiz, Radio Broadcasting, and Milk Quality and Dairy Food contests and 10 percent felt the same way about the Agricultural Mechanics contest, it was also concluded that with the exception of the four contests mentioned above, the four groups of respondents were generally satisfied with the types and nature of FFA contests currently offered in Texas.

Although it was concluded that the respondents were in favor of keeping the existing contests and did not see a need to revise existing contests extensively, the nature of the comments made about the overall contest program gives rise to an implication that serious attention should be paid to the way in which contests are used as instructional tools if they are to be relevant to the needs of the students and the community. This general concern was voiced by slightly over 24 percent of those respondents who made comments about the FFA contest program. If this is a genuine concern, then a further implication exists that greater emphasis in pre-service teacher education programs and in-service programs for teachers in the field needs to be placed on the underlying philosophy as well as the techniques of using contests as integral parts of the instructional program.

While slightly over one-half of the contests entered by schools correlated with the area of teaching interest of the teachers of vocational agriculture for the chapters under their direction, no clearcut implication can be drawn. However, the question can be asked if a tendency exists for teachers to teach

and encourage their students to participate in activities in which they themselves are most interested. This also implies that further study should be conducted in this area.

It was concluded that no significant correlation exists between the number of years of teaching experience and the types of contests entered.

Based on the results of this study, it was concluded that the null hypothesis which stated that there is no relationship between total number of students in the vocational agriculture program of the schools and the types of contests entered was accepted for 11 of the 15 contests. A positive relationship existed for four contests.

Since the null hypothesis was accepted in the case of 11 of the 15 contests, it appears that the number of students in the vocational agriculture program do not influence to a great extent the types of contests entered. The only exceptions, apparently, at the time the study was conducted were the Dairy Cattle Judging, Milk Quality and Dairy Foods Contests, Public Speaking Contest, and Meat Judging Contests.

As a result of the findings, it was also concluded that a null hypothesis could be accepted for 11 of 15 contests, namely, that there is no relationship between the number of teachers in the vocational agriculture department and the types of contests entered. The four contests for which the null hypothesis was rejected since a relationship existed were Dairy Cattle Judging, and Milk Quality and Dairy Foods at the .05 level and Livestock Judging and Meat Judging at the .01 level.

Since only four out of 15 contests displayed a significant relationship, the implication exists that the number of teachers in the vocational agricultural department does not appear to be a factor in the types of contests entered. However, the contests that were significant seem to be those that require more of the teachers' time as well as being contests in which students participate to the greatest extent.

Based on the results of this study, it was concluded that the null hypothesis which states that there is no relationship between the size of the high school and the types of contests entered could not be accepted for three out of 15 contests. Those contests were the Milk Quality and Dairy Foods Contest and Poultry Judging Contest at the .05 level, while Meat Judging Contest was at the .01 level.

Since the correlation of the various contests and the size of high schools were significant only for three contests out of 15, it appears that the size of high school is not a factor in the types of contests entered by students.

Recommendations

Based upon the findings of this research and the judgment of the writer, the following recommendations are offered with reference to the assessment of the Texas FFA contest program:

1. A summary of this study should be made available to all decision-makers in Texas interested in vocational education and particularly those concerned with vocational agriculture education.

2. Since the majority of the responding groups were of the opinion that the FFA contest program was of significant educational value to participating students, participation by all students should be encouraged and the opportunity to participate extended in all contests at the local level.
3. A general public information program emphasizing two way communication with emphasis on feedback should be initiated on the local level with respect to the FFA contest program to include school officials and the community in general.
4. Efforts should be made to enhance more and better communications between national, state, and area offices, and local chapters with reference to general operational procedures of the various FFA contests placing special emphasis on requirements, rules, and regulations governing each contest.
5. A series of in-service workshops should be made available to teachers of vocational agriculture and other personnel concerned with conducting FFA contest activities in respect to requirements, rules and regulations, and general operational procedures.
6. It is recommended that careful consideration by given to the implementation of the new and additional FFA contests for Cotton Classing, Crop Judging, and Agri-Business as suggested by the respondents.
7. A review of the nature of four contests should be accomplished as

soon as possible. These contests are: FFA Quiz, Radio Broadcasting, Milk Quality and Dairy Foods, and Agricultural Mechanics.

8. It is recommended that consideration be given to the following suggestions for improving the FFA contest program as reported by the respondents as soon as feasible:
   a. More competent judges should be used in all contests.
   b. Material which is used in FFA contests should be designed in such a way as to lend itself to regular classroom instruction with the entire class.
   c. Contests should be more applicable to agriculture and more relevant to the needs of the students.
   d. All districts and areas should use the same basic rules and requirements for their respective contests as the state and national contests if that is not the current practice.
   e. Rules governing FFA contests should be up-dated in keeping with current trends in education.
   f. Rules governing all FFA contests should be more strongly enforced.
9. Since the responding groups in percentages ranging from 57 percent to 79 percent indicated that seven contests not presently officially sponsored by the National FFA Organization should be included in the Texas contest program, it is recommended that the Texas FFA Association give consideration to sponsoring the

following contests:

a. Grass Judging

b. Horse Judging

c. Practice Judging

d. Major Livestock Show Judging

e. T. V. Farm Reporting

f. Talent

g. Sweetheart

10. Local, district, area, and state committees should continue to function and provide relevant information to up-date FFA contest activities, and the state committee recommendations should be carried out at the local chapter level.

11. It would be of value to follow up this study with a similar research effort in three or four years involving the same four groups of secondary school principals, parents, current FFA members, and teachers of vocational agriculture to determine if changes in perceptions about the FFA contest program in Texas have occurred.

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